

THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF TAI-
WAN'S STRAITS EXCHANGE
FOUNDATION

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2011

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, on March 9, 2011, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF). This Foundation was established as a vehicle to allow Taiwan and mainland China to work together on business matters, and other related issues.

Twenty years ago, when the Straits Exchange Foundation was formed, there was a great deal of tension between China and Taiwan. Flash forward to present day and the relationship between the two neighbors across the Taiwan Strait has improved dramatically.

These improved relations since President Ma Ying-jeou took office are most evident in The Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) that was signed between China and Taiwan in 2010, and allows for greater trade and commercial exchanges between the two countries.

Other significant agreements signed between Taiwan and China include: Direct Air and Sea Transport Agreements, which facilitate the free flow of people, goods and trade; Judicial Cooperation Agreement, by which the two sides agree to exchange law enforcement information to combat crime; Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Protection and Cooperation Agreement, which allows for better enforcement of IPR laws; plus an agreement to allow tourists from China to visit Taiwan. All these agreements and measures have resulted in increased trade flow, more cultural and tourism exchanges, and most of all, reduced tension along the Taiwan Strait.

While the Straits Exchange Foundation has improved the means of communication between Taipei and Beijing, I remain concerned

about the excessive Chinese military build-up off the coast of Taiwan. For the dialogue between China and Taiwan to have its intended effect—to promote peaceful and productive relations—then militarization of the region is not helpful.

Nevertheless, my colleagues and I are very encouraged to see the efforts between Taiwan and China to maintain peace and stability in East Asia. On the 20th Anniversary of the Straits Exchange Foundation, we congratulate the SEF on its achievement in promoting exchanges and better understanding across the Taiwan Strait.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is \$14,186,168,803,680.47.

On January 6th, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$3,547,743,057,386.60 since then.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

THE TEACHER TAX CUT ACT AND
THE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS
TAX RELIEF ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce two pieces of legislation that raise the

pay of teachers and other educators by cutting their taxes. I am sure that all my colleagues agree that it is long past time to begin treating those who have dedicated their lives to educating America's children with the respect they deserve. Compared to other professionals, educators are under-appreciated and under-paid. This must change if America is to have the finest education system in the world!

Quality education is impossible without quality teaching. If we continue to undervalue educators, it will become harder to attract, and keep, good people in the education profession. While educators' pay is primarily a local issue, Congress can, and should, help raise educators' take home pay by reducing educators' taxes.

This is why I am introducing the Teachers Tax Cut Act. This legislation provides every teacher in America with a \$3,000 tax credit. I am also introducing the Professional Educators Tax Relief Act, which extends the \$3,000 tax credit to counselors, librarians, and all school personnel involved in any aspect of the K-12 academic program.

The Teacher Tax Cut Act and the Professional Educators Tax Relief Act increase the salaries of teachers and other education professionals without raising federal expenditures. By raising the take-home pay of professional educators, these bills encourage highly qualified people to enter, and remain in, education. These bills also let America's professional educators know that the American people and the Congress respect their work.

I hope all my colleagues join me in supporting our nation's teachers and other professional educators by cosponsoring the Teacher Tax Cut Act and the Professional Educators Tax Relief Act.